

forsaking the net and working close to the ground, and is probably therefore much more common than it seems. I am indebted to Dr. J. W. Ismay for the identification. — A. A. ALLEN.

A HALF MELANIC PEACOCK BUTTERFLY: INACHIS IO L. — On Bank Holiday Monday 25th August, 1980, I was in the Shabbington Wood area on the Oxfordshire/Buckinghamshire border. Upon returning to my car, I disturbed a Peacock butterfly which flew to a fir tree and perched about 9ft. up with wings open. Although the forewings were slightly drawn back across the hind wings, the whole of the upper surface of the hind wings appeared to be an even velvety black with no eye spots. The effect was even more marked by the forewings being quite normal. The sight was so remarkable that I had to look again to make sure that I was not imagining it. After about a minute it flew off at about the same height as its perch and disappeared. Despite returning the next day and the following week-end, I did not see it again, although there were plenty of normal Peacocks around. — S. L. MEREDITH, 5, Rutlish Road, Merton Park, London SW19 3AL.

FURTHER SPREAD OF LITHOPHANE LEAUTIERI BOISD. — On 30th September, 1980 Mr. Arthur Watchman of Monks Eleigh, Suffolk took a specimen of Blair's Shoulder-knot in his garden trap, and another appeared on 26th October. These are believed to be the first records for Suffolk and are an extension of the spread of this species eastwards. — H. E. CHIPPERFIELD, The Shielding, Walberswick, Southwold, Suffolk.

EMERGENCE OF BIORRHIZA PALLIDA (HYMENOPTERA: CYNIPIDAE). — Early in June 1980 I collected an Oak Apple gall and put the sprig of Oak in water to keep fresh. Some 2½ weeks later the insects started appearing, and what was surprising was the degree of synchronization of the emergence: 95 insects appeared in the first 24 hours; about 65 during the following day, and an uncertain, but smaller, number thereafter. Such synchronization is of obvious biological advantage since it enables such weak-flying insects to find mates in a short time. Locality: Lea Marston, Warwickshire. — JOHN ROBBINS, 123b Parkgate Road, Coventry CV6 4GF.

UNUSUAL BEHAVIOUR OF THE BLACK ANT, LASIUS FULIGINOSUS (HYM.: FORMICIDAE). — On the evening of July 19th numbers of these ants were discovered in an airing cupboard, and they included alated adults as well as numbers of pupae, which had been stored beneath a bucket. The most interesting features of this occurrence are:— (i) All these ants had arrived since mid-morning; (ii) All the adults and pupae, and about 80% of the workers, had disappeared by 6.30 a.m. BST the next day; (iii) This was the first time in 16 years that ants had entered the dwelling; (iv) The dwelling was a first-floor flat, and the insects had apparently entered via the flat beneath, but without staying in the latter; (v) There were about 15% of the Yellow Ant, *Lasius mixtus*, amongst the